



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Recent Developments in Gongadze Case

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Paul W. Jones
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
March 3, 2005

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, the United States has also expressed its concern about the lack of progress in solving the case of Ukrainian journalist Heorhiy Gongadze, who was murdered under suspicious circumstances in the year 2000, on many occasions in OSCE and other fora.

Since Mr. Gongadze's disappearance, we have consistently pressed the Government of Ukraine, including senior officials, to mount an independent, transparent and comprehensive investigation and to hold the perpetrators accountable.

In 2002, at the invitation of the Ukrainian Government, the United States sent U.S. investigators to Ukraine to assist in solving the crime. Yet, the case remained unsolved.

We therefore welcome steps by Ukraine's new Government to rejuvenate the Gongadze investigation, which earlier this week led to the arrest of individuals who may have been involved in this crime.

The United States strongly supports and applauds President Yushchenko's stated intention to determine who ordered and organized Mr. Gongadze's death and to hold them accountable.

Doing so would serve as an example for the entire OSCE region and send a powerful signal about the importance Ukraine's new Government attaches to human rights, media freedom and the rule of law.

We thank the Delegation of Ukraine for the information on the Gongadze case it has provided at today's meeting and appreciate its announcement that it will keep the Permanent Council informed of future developments.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.